

REMARKS

The Examiner's attention to the present application is noted with appreciation. In response to the Examiner's comments on priority, applicant notes that 10/382,971 discloses thin feed spacers, which are claimed in present claim 20, and U.S. Patent No. 6,558,537, which is the parent application of 09/907,092 discloses differential pressure valving. This application claims priority to the said parent applications with respect to said subject matter.

The Examiner rejected the claims under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claims have been amended in response to such rejection.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-9, 16-19, 22, 23, and 25-30 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Wilson. The Examiner also rejected claims 10-15, 20, 21, and 24 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wilson. These rejections are respectfully traversed, particularly as to the claims as amended. The pressure actuated valving disclosed by Wilson comprises multiple pistons 71, 75 in multiple housings. Claims 1 and 25 have been amended to require that the DPA valve comprises feed and retentate inlet ports, as well as a retentate discharge port, and a single piston disposed in a single housing. This claimed apparatus is far simpler and less expensive than the valves disclosed by Wilson. Further, the single piston of the present invention positively seals the inlet port, whereas the spool valve 71 of Wilson only slideably blocks the retentate inlet port. Thus none of the cited art discloses or suggests all of the claimed elements of the present invention.

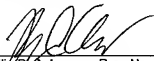
In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all grounds of rejection and objection have been avoided and/or traversed. It is believed that the case is now in condition for allowance and same is respectfully requested. If any issues remain, or if the Examiner believes that prosecution of this application might be expedited by discussion of the issues, the Examiner is cordially invited to telephone the undersigned agent for Applicant at the telephone number listed below.

Also being filed herewith is a Petition for Extension of Time to February 15, 2007, with the appropriate fee. Credit card authorization has been given for payment of the appropriate fee.

Authorization is given to charge payment of any additional fees required, or credit any overpayment, to
Deposit Acct. 13-4213.

Respectfully submitted,

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